atmosphere. Only a few older generation plants are not yet in a position to meet the prescribed standards. These fertilizer plants have also taken steps to set up facilities for treatment of plant effluents to meet the stipulated standards for their discharge.

Education of farmers on the optimal use of chemical fertilizers is also promoted through agricultural extension measures.

Closure of chemical fertiliser plants

510. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the closure of three chemical fertilizer plants in Orissa;

(b) if so, the reasons for the closure of those fertilizer units;

(c) the approximate number of the workers affected due to the closure of those units; and

(d) the steps taken to revive those units?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): (a) According to the information available as on 15th February, 1996, none of the three chemical fertilizer units in Orissa namely M/s. Fertilizer Corporation of India, Talcher, M/s. Paradeep Phosphates Limited, Paradeep and M/s. East Coast Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited has been closed.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) A scheme has been formulated for the revival of the Talcher unit of FCI involving a fresh investment of Rs. 523 crores apart from various financial reliefs and concessions. The implementation of the scheme is contingent on tying up of the funding arrangements and approval by the Board for Industrial & Financial Reconstruction.

Joint venture with France in Mining Exploration

511. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the French Government have extended support to India for mining explorations;

(b) whether any joint ventures are proposed in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of the agreement entered into; and

(d) whether gold mining activities in Kolar Gold Fields would be expedited under the provisions of the treaty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The protocol signed on 15th November, 1995 in New Delhi between India and France for co-operation in the field of mineral exploration and development envisages setting up of joint venture project in India and in third countries. The Hindustan Zinc Limited and BRGM of France have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with VMC, Vietnam for exploration of Pac Lang gold prospects in Vietnam.

(d) No, Sir.

लोहे और इस्पात के मूल्यों में वृद्धि

512. **श्री अजीत जोगी:** क्या इस्पात मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार के पास लोहे तथा इस्पात के मूल्यों में अत्यधिक वृद्धि को रोकने के लिए कोई योजना है;